a. classification of subject matter IPC 7 G10H1/06 G10H G10H5/00 G10H1/02 According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC B. FIELDS SEARCHED Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols) IPC 7 G10H Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used) EPO-Internal, WPI Data, INSPEC C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT Relevant to claim No. Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages Category ° 1-4,6-11US 5 587 548 A (SMITH III JULIUS 0) X 24 December 1996 (1996-12-24) column 1, line 13 - line 62 Υ column 4, line 49 - column 5, line 7 column 6, line 49 - line 63 column 7, line 40 - column 8, line 52 column 12, line 38 - column 13, line 23 figure 3 figures 10-11b figures 15,16 figures 19A-19C 5 US 5 521 328 A (KAKISHITA MASAHIRO) 28 May 1996 (1996-05-28) figures 10-17 figure 6 A abstract Patent family members are listed in annex. Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C. X Special categories of cited documents: "T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the "A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance invention *E* earlier document but published on or after the international "X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to filing date involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone "L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another "Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such docucitation or other special reason (as specified) O document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or ments, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art. "P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed "&" document member of the same patent family Date of mailing of the international search report Date of the actual completion of the international search 24/08/2004 11 August 2004 Authorized officer Name and mailing address of the ISA European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2 NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk Tel. (+31-70) 340-2040, Tx. 31 651 epo nl, Fax: (+31-70) 340-3016 Lecointe, M

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